
Western Kentucky University news for the Council on Postsecondary Education, April 2011

Dr. Dero G. Downing, WKU's fourth president, dies

Dr. Dero G. Downing, fourth president of WKU, died April 4 at the age of 89.

"Dero Downing's passing is the closing of an era for our beloved institution and for higher education in Kentucky," WKU President Gary Ransdell said. "From the principal's office at College High to the Presidency of WKU, he exuded leadership, style, eloquence, and empathy for the thousands of students, faculty, and staff with whom he worked and for whom he labored."

Dr. Downing began his long affiliation with WKU as a student in 1939, earning his undergraduate degree in mathematics in 1943. He was a prominent student leader during his undergraduate career, serving as president of the senior class. He was a star member of some of Coach Ed Diddle's finest basketball teams, including the first Western team to participate in the National Invitation Tournament in New York's Madison Square Garden.

After graduation, Dr. Downing joined the U.S. Navy as an ensign and served as an officer on a ship carrying troops and supplies in the first wave to hit the beaches at Normandy on D-Day in June 1944. In late 1945 he was released from active service with the rank of lieutenant.

In 1946 he returned to Western as a mathematics teacher and basketball coach at College High School, the high school division of Western's Training School, and completed his Master of Arts degree at Western in 1947. He gave up coaching in 1950 to devote himself full time to teaching mathematics and in 1956 was named director of the training school.

Dr. Downing received his Ed. S. degree in 1958 from George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville. He was named registrar for the WKU in 1959, director of admissions in 1962 and served as dean of business affairs before being named vice president for administrative affairs in 1965. In 1969, Dr. Downing became WKU's fourth president, a position he held until he resigned in 1979, being named president emeritus. From there he became president and chair of the College Heights Foundation.

Dr. Downing was inducted into the second class of the WKU Hall of Distinguished Alumni in 1993 and is also a member of the WKU Army ROTC Hall of Fame. In 2002, WKU named its International Center for Dr. Downing and former international student and longtime Downing friend Zuheir Sofia. Dr. Downing is also the namesake of WKU's student union, the Downing University Center, which opened in 1970.



A tribute to Dr. Downing can be found at <http://www.wku.edu/downing/>.



WKU wins Hearst photojournalism championship for 19th time

WKU's School of Journalism & Broadcasting has won the Hearst Intercollegiate Photojournalism Championship for the third consecutive year and the 19th time in the past 22 years.

WKU junior Tyler Cacek of Columbia, Mo., won the Picture Story/Series in the third photojournalism competition in the 2010-11 Hearst Journalism Awards Program and received a \$2,600 award. WKU senior Byran Anselm of Carmel, Ind., finished fifth and received a \$1,000 award.

The School of Journalism & Broadcasting received matching awards as well as \$10,000 for winning the Hearst photojournalism championship.

The top 10 in this year's Hearst Intercollegiate Photojournalism Competition were: WKU; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Ohio

University; University of Florida; Central Michigan University; University of Missouri; University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Indiana University; University of Montana; San Francisco State University.

WKU forensics team wins AFA national championship, 21st consecutive state championship

The WKU Forensics Team has won its seventh American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament championship, hosted this year by the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

WKU was crowned team sweepstakes champion with 412 points, while Bradley University placed second with 378.5 points and George Mason University placed third with 354.5 points.

In February the team won its 21st consecutive Kentucky Forensics Association championship.

Seven WKU students earn national recognition for academic excellence

Seven WKU students have earned honors in the form of national scholarships for 2011:

J. William Fulbright

Dunja Zdero of Louisville is working in Brazil as an English Teaching Assistant on a 2011-12 Fulbright grant. Zdero is a graduate of the WKU Honors College with degrees in news/editorial journalism and Spanish. Zdero is the latest WKU graduate to be recognized by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for her exemplary application. In 2009, The Chronicle of Higher Education named WKU as one of the top U.S. producers of Fulbright students among master's degree-granting institutions. Since 2007, 10 WKU students have won the competition.

U.S. Department of State Critical Language

Three WKU students have been awarded Critical Language Scholarships from the U.S. Department of State. Allie Surina of Brentwood, Tenn., Will Meredith of Bowling Green and J.P. Stovall of Owensboro, all students in the WKU Honors College and the Chinese Flagship Program, will travel to China for 7-10 weeks of embedded, intensive language instruction and cultural enhancement. The award covers all costs for travel, study and living expenses during the program. Meredith and Stovall will study in Beijing, while Surina will be placed at the Institute of Xi'an.

The CLS is an elite scholarship with 50 selected from 800 applicants. With these awards, eight WKU students have received CLSs: four in Chinese and four in Arabic.

Barry M. Goldwater

Three WKU students have been recognized by the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program. Brittany Morgan of Glasgow, a junior in the WKU Honors College, and Sarah Schrader of Bowling Green, a student in the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, were awarded Goldwater Scholarships. Clarice Esch of Somerset, also a Gatton Academy student, received an honorable mention.

The Goldwater Scholarship Program seeks to recognize excellence in the sciences and to encourage talented students to pursue research careers. The program limits four-year institutions to four nominations each year. In 2011, 275 scholarships were awarded from nearly 1,100 nominees. Scholarship recipients receive \$7,500 annually to cover undergraduate tuition, fees, books, or room and board. Since 2007, the Goldwater program has recognized more students from WKU than from any other college or university in Kentucky.

Hopkinsville CC, WKU sign joint admissions agreement

Students can now be jointly admitted to Hopkinsville Community College and WKU thanks to an agreement signed March 14 by HCC President James Selbe and WKU President Gary Ransdell. The joint admissions program will help students who complete an associates program at HCC move seamlessly into a bachelor's degree program at WKU. Qualifying students will be admitted to both schools and have access to student services at both, including academic advising.

WKU has more than 200 students jointly admitted through agreements with Owensboro Community and Technical College and Madisonville and Henderson community colleges.

For more WKU news, visit <http://wkunews.wordpress.com/>.



WKU President Gary Ransdell and HCC President James Selbe.